

APPENDIX E

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR THE WASSER/WINTER, PUYALLUP NURSERY,
AND MEEKER RESTORATION PROJECTS
TACOMA, WASHINGTON

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is the lead federal agency for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance for the proposed Wasser/Winter, Puyallup Nursery, and Meeker Restoration Projects, Tacoma, Washington. The cooperating agencies and tribes include the other Commencement Bay Natural Resource Trustees -- the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, the Washington Department of Ecology (as lead state Trustee), the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Washington Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Department of the Interior (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs). These parties are participating in damage assessment and restoration planning activities in the Commencement Bay environment.

NOAA prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for these projects to evaluate environmental project alternatives at three separate but functionally similar sites. The restoration projects will recreate lost intertidal habitat for a variety of plants and animals and provide benefits for juvenile salmonids, including chinook salmon. The preferred alternative at the Wasser/Winter site emphasizes resting and feeding habitat for juvenile salmonids in backwater pools. The Nursery site's preferred alternative creates a dendritic channel pattern in place of ponds. For the third project, the Meeker parcel, the Trustees selected the No Action Alternative as the preferred alternative. All three sites will be monitored and evaluated for their ability to enhance estuarine habitat and provide landscape connectivity with nearby mitigation and restoration sites. The preferred alternatives are based upon the best available technologies and best meet the goals and objectives of the natural resource trustees by maximizing ecological benefits and minimizing any potential for adverse environmental impacts to the environment. The public and other interested parties have participated through public meetings and workshops in the evaluation of these sites and the selection of the preferred alternatives.

DETERMINATION:

Based upon an environmental review and evaluation of the Environmental Assessment for the Wasser/Winter, Puyallup Nursery, and Meeker Restoration Projects, I have determined that the proposed actions do not constitute major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. Accordingly, environmental impact statements are not required for these projects.



Penelope D. Dalton

Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

National Marine Fisheries Service

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Date: 1/12/00